

Access Health Ct Extends 2021 Annual Open Enrollment Period Through January 15

Access Health CT (AHCT) has announced an extension for the 2021 Annual Open Enrollment period until January 15, 2021 as a result of the current health crisis, providing more time for CT residents to get covered. If new customers sign up for health insurance plans through Access Health CT from now until January 15, 2021, their coverage will start February 1, 2021.

In addition, Access Health CT customers who enrolled in a plan for 2021 now have the option to keep it or find a new plan; however if they make a plan change during this extension period, the new plan will have a start date of February 1, 2021 and they must pay the January bill (premium) for the original plan.

“We understand this year has been an extremely difficult year with the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Chief Executive Officer of AHCT, James Michel. “And we also know if 2020 has taught us anything, it’s the value of our health. There is plenty to think about

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The Hartford News December 17 – 23, 2020



Holiday Spirit Lights South Green

As a United States Senator, Chris Murphy is one of the most powerful people in the country. But he’s now also a resident of Hartford’s South Green neighborhood. And to make this dark year a little brighter, he decided to launch a campaign to decorate Barnard Park (also known as South Green) with holiday lights. According to Murphy, “Hundreds of donors stepped up. Mayor Luke Bronin cut through the red tape. My team volunteered their free time. And this week, the lights went on.” The South Park Inn Shelter also assisted in the project. (Hart photo)



SMSA Clemente Commemoration Capstone Project Goes Virtual

BY DONNA SWARR

This will be the ninth year that the Sports and Medical Sciences Academy holds a Clemente Commemoration event. Dolan Cassone, Javier Custodio, Gabriel Custodio, and Michael Infante are the intrepid SMSA students who are working on this project for 2020. I asked the students why they thought SMSA students have chosen to honor Roberto Clemente for their Capstone experi-

ty-building experience was shared by former students with incoming seniors. But as we all know, holding a public event is not an option. Fortunately, they knew this at the beginning of the school year. The students made proposals to the Clemente Commemoration committee, comprised of Hartford area residents and SMSA teacher Alex Mercado. The proposal included a virtual event with some traditional elements such as the anthems of the United States and Puerto Rico. But it also allowed some new

creative ideas. In the past, there was a featured speaker. This year many people have been invited to share their personal stories about Roberto Clemente. People of all ages, different geographies, and no longer is language a barrier due to the advantage of new technologies. So far the following people will share their thoughts; Victor Caratini, MLB Chicago Cubs Catcher, Luis Clemente, son of Roberto Clemente, Luis Miranda, Roberto

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SMSA Students l to r, Javier Custodio, Gabriel Custodio, and Michael Infante, (Missing: Dolan Cassone)

ence. Michael Infante gave me two reasons: “To share Roberto Clemente’s legacy as a player but also for the work that he did to help others.” He also said that working with the Commemoration Committee was an asset. The mentoring, relationship, and communi-

Hartford...Once Upon a Time



December 14, 2012 remains one of Connecticut’s darkest days. In the afternoon of a bright sunny day, news began to spread that one of the worst mass shootings in United State’s history had taken place in Newtown, Connecticut. A lone gunman had killed 20 children between ages six and seven and six adult staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Shocked and horrified city residents hastily organized a vigil that evening in Bushnell Park. Mayor Pedro Segarra is shown at center speaking to the large and somber crowd. (Hartford News file photo)

NEWS BRIEFS

Parranda Caravan Saturday in Frog Hollow

The popular band Promesa De Reyes la Familia Diaz-Santana will play on top of a float as it travels through the streets of Hartford’s Frog Hollow neighborhood this Saturday, December 19. El Parrandón de Hartford! is scheduled to start at approximately 1:00 pm. The event is being hosted by the Connecticut Institute for Community Development (CICD) Puerto Rican Parade, Inc. In past years, the organization has sponsored a traditional Holiday Parranda with strolling musicians and singers visiting shops and restaurants on Park Street. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that was not possible this year, but the CICD worked with Promesa De Reyes to develop this safe way to celebrate the holidays by singing along to the old songs familiar to the Puerto Rican community. Promesa De Reyes la Familia Diaz-Santana will also be playing for diners at the Parkville Market, 1400 Park Street, Hartford from 4-8 pm on Saturday. All persons coming to dine at the market must wear a mask and social distancing regulations will be strictly enforced.

City of Hartford Toy Drive Distribution this Saturday

There will be a drive-thru distribution of the toys to city youngsters on Saturday, December 19, from 11 am - 2 pm at Martin Luther King, Jr. School, 25 Ridgefield Street and The Learning Corridor, 15 Vernon Street. Toys will be given out on a first-come, first-serve basis. Parent or guardian must show proof of Hartford residence with a driver’s license, city or state ID or utility bill.

Free Food Distribution at Rentschler Field

FoodShare of Greater Hartford is continuing its bi-weekly distribution of free food packages to those who have been economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Food distribution will be from 8:30 am - 12 noon

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Protest Against Police Betting Pool

Hartford activist Kamora Herrington speaks at a protest that was held on Saturday, December 12, at Hartford City Hall to express anger at a betting pool allegedly organized by a Hartford Police Detective, Jeffrey Placzek, inviting several of his fellow officers and two court officials to wager on the location of the city’s first homicide of next year. Placzek has been reassigned and faces demotion and a four-month unpaid suspension. 16 other members of the HPD detective unit are also being investigated for how they responded to Placzek’s original text. However, Herrington and other speakers stressed their belief that the “dead pool” was not an isolated incident but symbolic of the police department’s callous attitude toward city residents. They demanded that immediate and concrete measures must be taken by police and city officials designed to change those attitudes. On Monday, December 14, Hartford City Council voted 6-3 in favor of dismissing Placzek from the HPD. (Hart photo)

RACK ‘EM UP!

In the HPD “dead pool” scandal, only one officer is behind the 8-ball. Did he get a bad break?

COMMENTARY BY ANNE GOSHDIGIAN

From thebilliardshop.com History of Pool and Billiards: “The word ‘pool’ means a collective bet, or ante. Many non-billiard games, such as poker, involve a pool but it was to pocket billiards that the name became attached. The term ‘poolroom’ now means a place where pool is played, but in the 19th century a poolroom was a betting parlor for horse racing. Pool tables were installed so patrons could pass time between races. The two became connected in the public mind, but the unsavory connotation of ‘poolroom’ came from the betting that took place there, not from billiards.”

Okay, I cited the above in order to explain the use of billiard jargon in the headline and subhead of this commentary. Now that’s out of the way and we can move on to a deeper analysis of why veteran Hartford Police Department Officer Jeffrey Placzek (holder of a clean record during his years with HPD) has become the sacrificial lamb for the truly unsavory and offensive attempt at setting up wagering on the date and location where Hartford’s first homicide of 2021 will take place. And now efforts are afoot to lead that lamb to the slaughter, as a sizable segment of the public, a majority of the City Council, and an incendiary editorial in the Hartford Courant are call-



ing for Placzek’s termination from the force. But wait. What about the rest of the “flock”, and more importantly, what about the overseers--the “shepherds” --who are entrusted with maintaining order among their charges?

Just to be clear, I’m in no way saying that a reprimand and some sensitivity training isn’t in order here. The fact is, if the dead pool invitation wasn’t sent out in an email, this incident would never have seen the light of day. Dumb move, Officer Placzek, because such pools have been around for longer than I’ve been alive, but they’re usually done among a small group of colleagues where one of them draws up and holds onto a chart where the bettors fill in their predictions. Sometimes instead of a wagering pool it’s just a topic discussed in the breakroom or off-duty at a bar. And it’s not confined to police. Oh, no. This “gallows humor” or “black humor” or whatever it’s called is endemic to pretty much all first-responder professions or those whose work is stress-laden and frequently involves getting up close and personal, often on a daily basis, with blood, gore, massive injuries, violence, death, and tragedy; firefighters, EMTs and ambu-

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Politically Speaking

A Fresh Look at Issues Facing our Region & State

BY MIKE MCGARRY

A Christmas Story...Nativity Scene at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph

The tale starts four years ago on a cold November day. Father (now Monsignor) James Shanley got a call from an old friend of the Cathedral of Saint Joseph. The caller asked if the Archdiocese of Hartford could use a nativity set. Shanley, who was pastor of the Cathedral at the time, said yes, and he, Peter Turezanik, Sacristan, and the rest of the Cathedral staff came to the rescue of the 24 lifesize figures that made up the nativity scene.

The set included camels, a horse, a cow, a donkey, goats, sheep and, of course, angels, kings, shepherds, Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus. It must have been quite a job moving the pieces, the camels alone take three people to carry them.

Shortly after the Cathedral acquired the figures, the donor sent this touching letter to Monsignor Shanley.

I know Tom is delighted as well. A West Hartford native and Trinity College grad who began his very successful career at The Travelers, he loved the City of Hartford. Deeply spiritual, he attended mass daily throughout his illness.

I know he is smiling down upon the nativity scene each Christmas as it rests in its rightful place at St. Joseph’s Cathedral!

I feel like he must have inspired the course of events to make it all possible!

Best wishes, Mary McGowan

The nativity scene was set up for the first time on the steps in front of the Cathedral before Christmas, 2016. However, time has taken its toll on the figures and it was obvi-



Hi Monsignor,

It is good to hear from you!

I was so grateful to you for taking the set and am absolutely delighted that you are able to offer it for the enjoyment of the residents of Hartford at its Cathedral!

I feel they have come home!

My husband, Tom McGowan, purchased the set from his friend, Kevin Ferguson, in 2011, the year we moved to our Stoner Drive House. Kevin’s mother owned the set and had recently passed away. Tom wanted to both help his friend who was clearing out his mom’s home, and bring delight to our own new neighborhood.

Every year we would have a handyman create and build a crèche and bring out the set for our neighbors on Stoner Drive.

My husband, Tom, was diagnosed with esophageal cancer in February 2015 and died on Easter Sunday 2017. I knew right away that it was not the right house for our five children and I to stay in, so we moved to a smaller home in town with no room for the manger set.

It is so magnificent that I hoped I could find it a worthy setting. I was thrilled when you accepted my call.

ous that the collection needed some restoration work.

So, early in 2017, the Cathedral Knights of Columbus asked Father Shanley if they could attempt to restore the figures. The answer was yes, and with Shanley’s support, the knights began the project.

It was soon discovered that the task of repairing and repainting the figures would require expert assistance. Fortunately, Tao LaBossiere, who is well-known for his trompe l’oeil painting at Saint Mary’s Home as well as many other works of art in the Greater Hartford region, was willing to help. He was hired to guide the project, obtain supplies and teach the knights the art of restoration.

The knights will forever be grateful to Tao for the extra, uncompensated hours he gave to the effort as well as his skill in painting the figures, especially the faces.

This year, the set includes a large golden star, two Christmas trees, three loads of greens, six bales of hay as well as the 24 restored figures. With cooperation of the Cathedral’s current pastor, Father McLearn, as well as plant supervisor Jim O’Toole (who built the platform for the figures, did a little repainting and attached the star), the nativity scene has become a tradition at the Cathedral for all to enjoy.

Framed photos of the nativity scene are now available from the Cathedral Knights of Columbus. Call 860-422-7937.

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IN MEMORY
Angela DiBacco



The staff of the Hartford News wishes to extend its deepest condolences to the DiBacco family on the passing of the family matriarch, Angela. She always brought a touch of sunny Italy to this cold New England town, and we will forever miss her warmth, wit and wisdom. Below is her obituary, reprinted from the *Hartford Courant*.

Angela (DiNino) DiBacco, 72, of Hartford, beloved wife of Mario DiBacco, passed away peacefully on December 11, 2020, at home surrounded by her loving family. Angelina's story began on July 11, 1948 in Pratola Peligna, L'Aquila, Italy, a picturesque, mountain village in central Italy. Angelina was the youngest of Adele (Pace) and Antonio DiNino's five children and she grew up during the meager years of post-World War II Italy. Because of her arduous childhood, "Angelina", as she was affectionately called by her friends and family, learned to be self-sufficient. She developed a quick wit and appreciated all she achieved. In the summer of 1969, she happened upon a charming young man, Mario DiBacco, returning from America to visit his Italian family. After walking by and being mesmerized by Angelina, he finally built up the courage to introduce himself to her. Mario and Angelina chatted for hours, realizing they grew up only a few streets away from each other. They shared stories and fell immediately in love. After 3 days of courting Angelina in front of their town's church, La Basilica Madonna Della Libera, Mario proposed and married her within this same church on October 12, 1969. Angelina trusted the love of her new husband and courageously followed him back to the United States. In December 1969, they started their new life together in Hartford, Connecticut. Although the early years in America were challenging without knowing the English language, a little language gap wasn't going to stop her! She kept repeating to herself: "piano, piano, vai sano e lontano" (translated: "little by little, you'll go far and stay sane"). Her persistence, along with the steadfast love and support of her husband, helped carry them through the initial difficulties together. Angelina had been an aspiring tailor back in Italy – she'd designed her own wedding dress - so she initially went to work at the Coracci & Sons Dress Factory, while Mario worked as a machinist at a local factory. A twist of fate soon changed their lives. Mario's factory closed and asked him to relocate or lose his job. Being that Angelina was finally feeling comfortable within her newly adopted Hartford home, they decided to take another leap of faith and buy a little convenience store, the South Street Market. They spent a few years at this Market, realized they loved working together and in 1975, they relocated to a larger store on Franklin Avenue, where they specialized in Italian foods and there they have remained to this day. Their Franklin Avenue store, DiBacco's Market, was not only about Italian food, but about building relationships. Angelina believed being in business meant being personal. She'd say, "if it's not personal or important to you, why do it?" This personal touch was ever present. Angelina would dance, sing, tell funny stories, listen to people's troubles and play Italian music really, really loudly with the kids or customers in the store. Angelina loved children's laughter and she'd sneak them Kinder chocolates along with countless mortadella and provolone sandwiches. Family was everything to Angelina. She was over the moon when her son, Johnny was born in 1970, and her family completed when her daughter, Patricia, was born in 1972. Angelina would lovingly make her children's clothes when they were infants and toddlers. She would take countless walks with them in Elizabeth Park or Goodwin Park in Hartford. They would have delicious meals together discussing life, their days at school and they loved to sing together. Angelina had a beautiful voice and was always singing or whistling, a talent she passed to her children, Johnny and Patricia who loved to sing (or whistle) with her. Angelina couldn't wait to introduce her children to her parents in Italy. They went to Italy every 2 years to spend time with their grandparents, cousins and extended family. As a result, Angelina's children learned to speak Italian, they learned so much about their heritage and had the opportunity to spend unforgettable moments with their Italian grandparents. Angelina and Mario took the kids on family road trips to Canada, Niagara Falls, Disney World and happily brought along her kids friends. If the kids were happy, Angelina was happy. To better balance motherhood and working, she and Mario lived above their Franklin Avenue store. Angelina spent every moment with her children when she wasn't working. Family was everything to her. As the years progressed, Angelina welcomed Roberto DiBacco, her brother-in-law, to live with them during his teen years whom she raised as her own son. In 1986, Angelina was honored with a mother-son dance with Roberto when he married his wife, Tina Liberatore. She loved being a "Zia" ("Auntie") to their kids, Alexandra DiBacco Majewski and Roberto DiBacco, Jr. In 1999, their family grew to add a daughter-in-law, Michele Raymond, and

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All is Bright!

BY DONNA SWARR

The nominations are in, and entries for the Hartford News & Hartford Chamber of Commerce Holiday Decorating Contest will be judged this weekend. Winners will be announced in the December 24th edition. After a preliminary drive around the city, it's become obvious to me that a lot of people have put loads of thought and effort into lighting up this town!

Martha Stewart I'm not. I was uber-impressed with myself when I put up my lights Thanksgiving weekend. It was warm, I took time to check every string, and with great patience I got up and down a ladder a thousand times. I was happy to wait until the first week of December to turn them on. But then we started to notice light bulbs, as pictured, littered around the base of the cedar tree. What the heck? Then we noticed dangling cut wires. In my 50+ years of putting up outdoor decorations I have never had anything like this happen. I found out that it isn't that unusual. We were told to wrap our wires in tinfoil and spray them with peppermint. We also had to select a different style as four out of five strings were destroyed. And then we discovered we needed another timer, which included a remote device. Why



would a timer include a remote device? Well, guess what, it wasn't really a timer.

If you're looking for great places to take a stroll or drive, I can recommend four locations in the city.

In the south end, Linnmoore Street has a really nice display, and Fairfield Avenue boasts a cluster of pretty displays. The neighborhood around Goodwin Park where Holiday Light Fantasia is set up has some really amazing displays along South Street and Campfield Avenue. You'll be amazed by what you see on Flatbush Avenue between Westbrook and Hillside Avenues, then head east on Hillside for more.

People are raving about Kenyon Street in the West End. I got disoriented on Vine Street and thought I was back in the south end near Fantasia, but no! It was someone's front yard—with music! And one of the biggest surprises—a virtual fairyland of color—is right on Main Street at South Green in Barnard Park.

I guarantee that you, and especially the kids, will be knocked out by what's on display there. We're talking "Oohs!" and "Aahs!" aplenty Get out and enjoy the show from your car or by foot. I bet after a little snow falls, they'll look even more magical.

School Unions' Open Letter to the Hartford Public School Community

The following was submitted to the Hartford News last week by Carol Gale, President, Hartford Federation of Teachers. A postscript follows, updating the issue as of December 14th, 2020.

Dear HPS policy makers,

A coalition of all presidents of HPS-related unions wrote a statement to the Superintendent of Schools expressing concerns for the safety and well-being of our school communities. One demand in that statement was to meet with the superintendent collectively. This demand was made to optimize our ability to work together for the improvement of our district. Unprecedented times call for unprecedented measures. The superintendent's response was to set up individual meetings with each president. Why meet twelve times when you can meet once and get a comprehensive perspective on the needs of the frontline staff in all the schools?

Our communication needs major improvement during the current state of affairs. The district's response time to the concerns of the unions is very inconsistent. We need to have effective and transparent flow of information, as there are a number of critical areas affected by COVID-19.

Hartford Public Schools' unions share a joint concern regarding protection and support during the COVID pandemic. For example, Special Police Officers, working on site during the pandemic since March 2020, are now deemed essential workers. However, they receive no incentives, inadequate protective equipment, and lack of support from the Board of Education. Additionally, school secretaries requested plexiglass be installed for their protection, and their request was denied.

Safety was at the forefront of public policy decisions in Connecticut during the initial phase of COVID. In time, the economy and schools reopened. We now have experience with in-person learning during a pandemic. It no longer feels safe across the many positions represented by these unions. In Hartford, September saw an average of 1.5 COVID cases in our schools per day. By October that average increased to 3 cases a day. To date, the November daily average is 8 cases per day. Furthermore, the Hartford Courant reported on November 20, 2020 that "coronavirus cases among K-12 students in Connecticut jumped 70% over the prior week." This

trajectory indicates a direction that should alarm us all.

A related concern is the disruption to the delivery of instruction and the overall ability of a school to function when numerous staff members are quarantined. We asked that quarantine data be published for greater community awareness, yet that level of transparency is not yet forthcoming. We do know that a recent 14-day period found a total of 163 staff members quarantined, up from a total of 115 staff quarantined in the prior 14-day period. (Note: These numbers do not include staff who had to self-quarantine due to COVID exposure to themselves or their children outside of Hartford Public Schools.) On several occasions the Hartford Public School district closed a particular school because of COVID-related concerns. What is not being addressed satisfactorily is the added anxiety quarantines place on students and staff, as well as the added stress on teachers and support staff who are asked to cover for their colleagues who are out on quarantine.

The positivity rate within Hartford Schools cannot be isolated from the rise of COVID cases in the Hartford community, currently at 60/100,000. This rate is only projected to rise. Therefore, for the safety of the entire Hartford School community, Hartford schools must move to fully remote learning as soon as possible to mid-January to avoid the spread predicted to occur after holiday gatherings.

We understand in these trying times that the landscape for solutions to address needs is constantly changing. The climate and culture in our school system feels overwhelming, demoralizing, and uncaring. We request that the BOE support their employees by showing more consideration and respect for our education community; thus, hearing our concerns and working on solutions in collaboration with us. We stand ready, willing, and able to do our part, and we cannot do it alone.

We collectively raise a grave concern for the safety of our entire community as the COVID-19 pandemic rises in its second wave. We request a public forum with the (BOE/superintendent). We will not be silent when the voices of our community need to be heard.

Postscript: On Friday, December 11th, the eight HPS union presidents listed below met with Superintendent Leslie Torres-Rodriguez. They had hoped to meet with her alone. However, she brought

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Invitation to the Dance

A holiday favorite to enjoy at home

REVIEW BY MARIE SULTANA ROBINSON



Virtual streaming of events has opened up a world of wonder to many. The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, is streaming "Nutcracker Suite and Spicy" for the holiday season. Deborah Gaudet, Head of Events and Special Programs at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, opens the video explaining that for the past 11 years, this innovative, diverse and modern version of the Nutcracker has been held every year in the AETNA theater. This year it is streaming for free until December 31, 2020.

This Nutcracker version is not your great grandmother's ballet. The original Nutcracker was staged in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1890. This creation pays homage to the story of Clara, the Nutcracker Prince, Herr Drosselmeyer, the Mouse King, and all the Sweets and Treats, but with a clever twist. It is choreographed and directed by Carolyn Paine and performed by CONNetic Dance.

The music ranges from the classical score by Tchaikovsky to more modern music interpretations, which are variations on his themes. "The Nutcracker

Overture by Duke Ellington" opens with a tap-dance street scene. The Victorian Christmas Party is replaced by a modern Ugly Sweater Party with modern music like "Nutcracker Rock by Otis Grand" and "Hey there Drosselmeyer" by N2K Nutcracker, and features a great jitterbug ensemble number. Some of the other music that is featured is "Sugar Rum Cherry" by Duke Ellington, "Nutcracker Spanish" by the Invisible Czars, and the "Russian Flowers Dance" by DJ Herax.

There are some standout performances that go beyond the classical ballet which is also featured, including the hip-hop street battle between the Mouse King and the Soldiers, the breakdancing and aerobatics of Drosselmeyer and the Doll, and one no child should miss--Lucie the Dancing Labradoodle. This is a holiday favorite that should be experienced for its wide variety of music traditions and dance styles.

Curtain going up at: https://vimeo.com/490257596?fbclid=IwAR163pppn2ZrXLsS54OfTWG1bRfjBBNP_KvbY16h1b3SVoFyyVE1OhDyIx0

Access Health Extends Deadline

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when choosing a health insurance plan and we want to make sure our customers are able to pick the best plan for themselves and their families. We hope this extension provid-

Street, just north of Downtown. Other in-person enrollment centers are located in Groton, Bridgeport, New Haven, New Britain and Stamford. For more information, go to: <https://learn.accesshealthct.com>



Keila Sanchez, CRT Access Health Navigator, at the organization's In-person Enrollment Center at 330 Market Street, just north of Downtown Hartford. (Hart photo)

ing extra time allows Connecticut residents to make sure they picked a quality, health insurance plan that fits their needs and gives them the best value in 2021."

Access Health CT will continue to offer free enrollment help to all Connecticut residents during the extension:

How To Enroll

- Online: AccessHealthCT.com (Live chat available)
- In-Person Enrollment (by appointment only): The Access Health In-Person Enrollment Center is located at 330 Market

[/findus/#inpersonenrollmentlocations](https://findus/#inpersonenrollmentlocations).

- Phone: 1-855-805-4325, Mon. – Fri. 8 AM - 6 PM, Sat. 9 AM-3 PM
- With Certified Brokers or Enrollment Specialists in your community. Go to: <https://www.accesshealthct.com/AHCT/ctix/#/astSrch/assistSearch>
- At a time that works for you at a Virtual Enrollment Fair*, more information here: <https://learn.accesshealthct.com/findus/#virtualenrollment>

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Library Announces 2021 Baby Grand Jazz Line-up

Hartford Public Library has announced the musicians who will perform for its 2021 Baby Grand Jazz (BGJ) series, made possible by the Kaman Foundation.

Due to the current pandemic, the concerts will be only be available online.

Jazz series has something for everyone.

BGJ 2021 Schedule

- January 3 – Ken Serio Trio
- January 10 – June Bisantz & Alex Nakhimovsky
- January 17 – Anton Kot Trio



The Ken Serio Trio will open Hartford Public Library's 2021 Baby Grand Jazz Series. The series is going online only this year due to the pandemic.

BGJ concerts will run every Sunday from January 3 through April 25, 2021 at 3 pm and can be enjoyed online on either HPL's Facebook (facebook.com/HartfordPublicLibrary) or YouTube (www.youtube.com/user/HPLCT) pages.

The series continues to be one of the library's most popular offerings, with thousands of people watching virtually during the truncated 2020 season.

"There's nothing like live music. While we are all still staying safe, we're continuing to bring Baby Grand Jazz to you live on Sundays! Cozy up this winter at home and tune in to hear some of our favorite Hartford area musicians, as well as some fresh talent from the region," said Liz Castle, HPL's programming manager.

This season the library is offering a wide array of jazz expression. From covers to jazz classics to innovative fusions of styles and instrumentation, the Baby Grand

- January 24 – Andrew Wilcox Sextet
- January 31 – CBG and the Hartford Sound
- February 7 – Medusa
- February 14 – The John Kordalewski Trio
- February 21 – Charu Surl and Friends
- February 28 – Big Read kickoff
- March 7 – HGTS
- March 14 – Kyoko Oyobe
- March 21 – Jimmy Gavagan Trio
- March 28 – New England Jazz Ensemble
- April 4 – EASTER (No concert)
- April 11 – Jonathan Barber and Vision Ahead
- April 18 – People of Goodwill
- April 25 – Nelson Bello

For more information about the series, visit <https://www.hplct.org/classes-seminars-exhibits/baby-grand-jazz>.



MARG Board of Directors Meeting

The Maple Avenue Revitalization Group (MARG) couldn't have its annual Holiday Meet and Greet this year, due to the pandemic. But the organization's Board of Directors got together on Thursday, December 10 to discuss plans for next year. Shown above are Patricia Knapp, Raquel Calderon, Wendy Pawlak, Victor Blanco, MARG President Hyacinth Yennie, Beverly Thompson, Claudette Worth, Carol Clark, Anna Cieri, Bill Ericson, Maxine Henry, Andrene Bent-Jarvis and Beryl Tomlinson. An award was also presented to Calderon for community service. (Hart photo)

Asylum Hill
Congregational
Church

THOSE
WHO
DREAM

Christmas Eve &
Christmas Day

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All links on www.ahcc.org/calendar

Thursday, December 24 • Christmas Eve

4:30pm Live Nativity (weather permitting); live-streamed

8:00pm Pre-recorded candlelight service on YouTube

11:30pm In-person outdoor candlelit service

Friday, December 25 • Christmas Day

10:30am A Zoom prayer service of Scripture, prayer, and song



Photo Display Salutes Pandemic's Heroes

Photographer Joe Gaylor (left) discusses his display of 35 photos depicting people from all walks of life who worked through the pandemic to keep the community safe. The portraits included healthcare workers, firefighter, police officers, grocery store clerks, public transit workers and others. The photos are displayed on a city-owned abandoned property at 1355 Main Street, just north of Downtown Hartford. At center is Mayor Luke Bronin, who thanks Gaylor for his efforts. (Hart photo)

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In Memory of Angela DiBacco

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a son-in-law, Joseph Edward Beaudry III. All of them added a little something extra to her life and were a great help to Angelina in her later years when she needed them most. Finally, in 2000, Angelina's heart expanded exponentially when she made the transition from mother to Nonna. Her first beautiful grandchild, Gabriella Adeline DiBacco was born. Her heart grew even more when welcoming Luca Mario DiBacco, her first grandson. In 2008, Angelina was the first at the hospital when her daughter brought in Angelina's next grandson, Joseph Edward Beaudry IV. In 2010, Mario Antonio Beaudry, her fourth and final grandchild, arrived successfully into this world. Gabriella is a tall and elegant replica of her Nonna. Luca could charm his Nonna into giving him nearly anything with his smiles, Joseph delighted his Nonna with his intellect and Mario continuously surprises his Nonna with his empathy for others. Angelina was so proud of all of her grandchildren and could never stop smiling when they were around. "Nonna" was the sweetest sound to her ears. Angelina, lastly, worked part-time in the Connecticut Children's Medical Center kitchen for several years while also managing DiBacco's Market. She loved bringing spaghetti and smiles to the sick children or giving hugs if they needed encouragement. Angelina was an active member of the Pratolana Mutual Benefit Society and made hundreds of pizzelle for

their annual Madonna Della Libera Festival. She was also an active member of the Daughters of Canicattini Bagni, the Italian American Ladies Society, the Mount Carmel Saint Christina Society and an honorary member of several other local Italian clubs. There's an ancient Roman expression: "Si vuoi essere amato, sii amabile" ("if you wish to be loved, be lovable"). Angelina loved people and she loved life. She loved being a wife. She loved being a mother. She loved being a grandmother. She loved laughing with her family and friends with all her heart and soul. Her love was so radiant, that it illuminated the best in the people around her. She was our North Star, always pointing us, her family, in the right direction. She is now our Angel Star and we will miss her forever. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 11 a.m. at Maria Reina De La Paz Church (St. Lawrence O'Toole Church), 494 New Britain Avenue, Hartford. Attendance in church is limited, masks and social distancing required. Burial will be private. The D'Esopo Funeral Chapel of Wethersfield has been entrusted by the family with the arrangements. Memorial donations in Angelina's name may be made to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

For online expressions of sympathy to the family, please visit www.desopofuneralchapel.com. To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit the D'Esopo Sympathy Store.

Anne Goshdigian Commentary

Continued from page 2

lance personnel, ER staff, and medical professionals. Does this mean those people lack compassion, are racist, cruel, or just plain stupid, and are unsuitable for the work they do? No, it just means they're human. This humor which most of us see as ill-conceived is for them a coping mechanism to counteract the ever-present nightmares and the PTSD that goes with that turf, a valve to relieve the pressure. And in the very challenging and dysfunctional Hartford school system, I wouldn't be a bit surprised if educators on the front lines didn't crack some "inappropriate" jokes among themselves for similar reasons.

Back to the flock. Did Placzek take it upon himself to act alone as the perpetrator of the pool? Maybe

not. If it is indeed a longstanding part of the HPD culture as some have attested, then it's also likely that one or more of his superior officers gave it their tacit nod. A couple—notably Cicero and Medina—have received a slap on the wrist but haven't been targeted for banishment from the force. Both have been cited for actions resembling those of bumbling Keystone Kops during this year's "Thodygate". How about those shepherds? Chief Thody himself looks the fool—and a hypocrite—for his pious remarks to the media saying in effect that he's shocked—shocked! —by Placzek's big goof, considering the serious questions raised about his own cockamamie, dangerous, and possibly illegal behavior. His boss--COO Thea Montanez—has remained silent

about his accountability for both scandals, for reasons known only to her. Mayor Bronin has also stood behind his appointees over and over again, and parroted the same lame rhetoric as Thody. As for the City Council, as one friend recently noted it's extremely ironic that those Democrats who like good sheep themselves trotted after Bronin's appointment of Thody in spite of his less than stellar record at HPD, when they should have given it a thumbs-down vote. Bad shepherds, all. Apparently, those listed above who are seeking vengeance upon Officer Placzek are satisfied that his removal from HPD will be justice served; case closed. Let's look a little deeper folks. That sacrificial lamb is neither black nor white. There's a big gray area that remains to be seen.

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School Union Open Letter

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along her cabinet – eleven department heads from HPS Central Office. At the meeting, Dr. Torres-Rodriguez stated that the district "...has absolutely no intentions to go remote".

Endorsements of HPS Union Presidents:

- 1. Verna Bernard-Jones, President, Hartford Federation of School Health Professionals, Local 1018A/B
- 2. Victor Cristofaro, President,

Hartford Principals and Supervisors Association, AFSA Local 22

- 3. Shellye Davis, President, Hartford Federation of Paraeducators, Local 2221
- 4. Dr. W. Michael Downes, President, Hartford Federation of Substitute Teachers, Local 1018
- 5. David Dufault, President, Hartford Federation of School Special Police Officers, Local 1018D
- 6. Carol Gale, President, Hartford Federation of Teachers, Local

1018

- 7. Tracy Gunn, President, Hartford Federation of School Secretaries, Local 1100
- 8. Jane Johnson, President, Hartford Federation of Child Development Associates, Local 1018
- 9. Scott Kanaitis, President, AFCME local 818
- 10. Rita Kitchens, President, Hartford Educational Support Personnel, Local 82
- 11. Sebastian LaRosa, President, Custodial & Food Service, Local 566

SMSA Clemente Commemoration

Continued from page 1

Clemente Foundation, Josh Solomon, Hartford Yard Goats, Jeffrey Dressler, lawyer and philanthropist, and Geraldo Reyes, CT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF Alfred Edwards, AKA Alfred Anthony Edwards (20-01135)

The Hon. Foye A. Smith, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Hartford Probate Court, by decree dated December 14, 2020, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Carmen Y. Zayas Clerk

The fiduciary is: Wayne Edwards c/o Steven Michael Basche, Hassett & George, PC 945 Hopmeadow Street Simsbury, CT 06070

State Representative for Waterbury. SMSA student Michael Infante's role was to come up with questions for the speakers, feeling that otherwise they might focus solely on Clemente's legacy as a baseball player. Every year there is a student

NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF Ernest C. Wignall (20-01076)

The Hon. Foye A. Smith, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Hartford Probate Court, by decree dated December 7, 2020, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Carmen Y. Zayas Clerk

The fiduciary is: Danielle Paulette Ferrucci, Shipman & Goodwin LLP One Constitution Plaza Hartford, CT 06103

competition on some kind, such as an essay or an artistic representation of Clemente's legacy. SMSA student Gabriel Custodio's role is to develop and execute the student competition. This is proving to be very challenging due to the pandemic. SMSA student Dolan Cassone's efforts will be as the grand wizard of editing the videos sent by the speakers, singers, and announcer. He has been working with Nigel White at the Hartford Public Library's Youth Media Lab. The other students will be pitching in to help out. Another big change is that the program will go live the morning of Thursday, December 31st and you can watch it any time after that whenever you want. It will be uploaded onto YouTube. Go to Facebook and search for the Roberto Clemente Commemoration Committee Hartford. The link to the event will be embedded on the 31st in the late morning. It will truly be an inspiring experience, and isn't that something that we all could use right now?



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El Informativo Latino

Inseguridad alimentaria continúa aumentando en Connecticut

Muchas familias en todo Connecticut y el país están lidiando con la inseguridad alimentaria y los centros de distribución de alimentos están trabajando arduamente para satisfacer la demanda sin precedentes.

Foodshare ha mantenido su despensa de alimentos para autoservicio en Rentschler Field en East Hartford en funcionamiento desde que comenzó la pandemia. Reparten comidas a unos 2,000 automóviles todos los días.

En este momento, Foodshare necesita voluntarios y donaciones monetarias. Pueden comprar alimentos a una tarifa con descuento para que su dinero llegue más lejos cuando done efectivo en lugar de latas.

Varias veces a la semana, el estacionamiento en Rentschler Field cobra vida con camiones llenos de alimentos que se entregan y voluntarios que entregan alimentos a las familias necesitadas.

Las familias han podido llegar en su

automóvil y colocar cajas de comida adentro sin hacer preguntas.

Foodshare lo inició inicialmente como una campaña de recolección de alimentos de emergencia y lo mantuvo durante los últimos ocho meses para satisfacer la demanda.

Connecticut Feeding America estima que ha habido un aumento del 28% en la inseguridad alimentaria desde el comienzo de la pandemia. Hay alrededor de 545,000 personas en el estado que padecen inseguridad alimentaria, que es uno de cada cuatro niños.

El presidente de Foodshare dijo que no están respondiendo al virus en sí, sino al impacto económico del virus, por lo que aunque una vacuna sería excelente, no va a resolver el problema de la inseguridad alimentaria.

Según Feeding America, casi 50 millones de estadounidenses enfrentarán inseguridad alimentaria este año.

Cómo saber si tu hijo tiene ansiedad escolar por las clases en línea y cómo solucionarla



La ansiedad, la depresión y la deserción de los alumnos en las clases virtuales a causa de la pandemia de coronavirus tiene preocupados a padres y maestros. Es por eso que la psicóloga Karen Dybner Madero y la directora escolar Mayra Lozano platicaron y enlistaron las señales de la ansiedad escolar que puedes identificar en tu hijo y comparten algunos consejos para tratarla.

"La depresión y ansiedad se manifiestan de formas variadas. Esto incluye irritabilidad y tristeza, pérdida de interés en las cosas que antes le gustaban, aislamiento social, sintiéndose sin esperanza, cambios en los patrones del sueño o apetito, pesadillas, dolor de estómago, dolor de cabeza y declaraciones a la muerte o miedo a esta", explicó Dybner.

Sin embargo, la experta destaca que estos sentimientos o comportamientos pueden suceder ocasionalmente, "pero es cuando continúan por más de 10 días seguidos que tenemos que considerar el diagnóstico de depresión y ansiedad".

1. Crea una rutina familiar para aprovechar al máximo las clases: esto ayuda a darle una estructura para que sienta que el colegio es una actividad importante y específica, "es decir, desde cambiarse, tomar el desayuno, sentarse en el lugar designado para los estudios, la regularidad de los horarios", etcétera.
2. Promueve las conexiones sociales: según la especialista, tanto los padres como los maestros tienen que encontrar la forma de promoverlas de manera diaria porque

el acompañamiento de los compañeros "es algo importantísimo para mantener la motivación y para que los chicos no sientan tan aislados con su enseñanza". Esto puede incluir tener un amigo o amiga con quien hace las tareas, o teniendo proyectos en grupo o simplemente teniendo breaks durante sus clases, indicó.

3. Conoce cuáles son los objetivos de la materia que está cursando tu hijo: de esta forma, puedes hablar de ellos con él para que no se sienta tan aislado de lo que está aprendiendo.

También es importante que tu hijo tenga objetivos escolares, es decir, lo que él quiere aprender durante el curso y qué es lo que quiere lograr. "Por otro lado, tomando respiros o pausas durante el día también va a ser necesarios para que los hijos se puedan 'desenchufar' un poquito del colegio para lograr un balance", recaló la psicóloga.

Mientras que la directora del colegio 'Hawaiian Elementary', Mayra Lozano, resaltó la importancia de hablar sobre la salud mental para que los niños aprendan desde pequeños a reconocer sus sentimientos.

"En realidad es muy importante que se tenga la comunicación sobre la salud mental en general. Es importante que los niños aprendan desde pequeños a reconocer sus diferentes sentimientos y también que aprendan las estrategias que son necesarias para responder de una manera más apropiada", aseguró. *By Iris Rodriguez*

Los casos de COVID-19 están subiendo en Connecticut. Busque dónde hacerse la prueba en ct.gov/coronavirus

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